

844 house, and the men usually leave the scene. Women are ashamed of their husbands seeing the afterbirth because they joke about it with other men. [522] (I do not know what the joking is about—possibly it is related to the frequency of sexual intercourse during pregnancy, since the placenta is believed to be increased by male sperm.) [833]

There is no ceremony attending childbirth. Although some women are assisted by one female relative, most call in a midwife, who is referred to as "grandmother of the child" and who comes when the birth pangs begin. [59] There is only one recognized midwife in Tzo'ontahal; she is the sister of one of the practicing curers and a niece of one of the former leading curers of Alannantik. She has patients on both sides of the dual division. On rare occasions, caused by witchcraft the Indians believe, a woman [845] fails to give birth after two or three days of labor, and then a curer is [756] called in.

846 The child is delivered with the mother kneeling on the floor. The midwife cuts the umbilical cord with a knife, and the child's navel is tied with a cord. The child is wrapped in cloths which have been smoked over incense, and then a woman's sash is wrapped around him from shoulders to feet, firmly binding the arms and legs so that they cannot move. It is felt that if this is not done, the child will snatch at everything and eventually become a thief. The body remains bound in this way for fifteen days. The umbilical cord and placenta are buried in the houseyard. Some say that a boy's umbilical cord may be tied in a tree "so that when the child grows, he can climb trees and cut fruit." The mother is given a drink of coffee, and the midwife binds her stomach with a band. Three days later the woman enters the sweatbath to cleanse herself. The midwife goes in with her and rubs her with branches of orange leaves and massages her stomach. If the child is born away from his own house, he is brought to it with great care so that his soul will not be dislodged from his body. The midwife makes a pad with branches of bushes growing near the springs, and the father sprays the child's body with springwater from his mouth.

[753] In the first "twenty days or one month" of life, the child's contacts with the world are limited to the immediate family in order to guard against soul-loss and illness from "hot" glances of outsiders. When anyone not of the household approaches the house in which there is a newborn child, he

Taking Care of the Lord Spirits

217

their eyes, the posture of dance in which they clasped their hands at their stomach-band—all of these manifested the shame that they were overcoming. Whether they really felt the shame or not was irrelevant since they were being judged in terms of their behavior. The wives circled around with a two-step, their eyes downcast and their hands clasped over their stomach-bands, while their husbands stepped up and down in place in a ring around them, shaking the gourd rattle and joking.

When the dancing was terminated, a joking session was initiated by the nakawane. The signal for this was the lighting of the first round of cigarettes. Smoking, like drinking, was required of everyone and was rarely indulged in privately. The women sometimes put aside the cigarettes, but they had to accept them. At midnight a meal of bean tortillas and coffee was served.

The fourth day (Slok' Krus). The four regidores arrived early in the morning to raise the alférez and take him to the cabildo to receive the oath. In this function the regidores were referred to as personaetik or "persons." The Spanish term persona signifies the exterior appearance by which men of merit were distinguished, and in its Latin derivation persona is the mask by which role is indicated. I think it is in the sense of assuming a new identity that the Indians incorporated the term as a reference for specific roles assumed by the regidores at this time. The alcaldes, or judges, were on this day referred to as koronaetik, or colonels. This reference term evoked the military ranking system, as did also the term alférez or captain, and established the relative ranking of the two sets of officials in the cabildo on the day of receiving the banners. The alfereces were given titles to indicate the order of their entry into office. The seating order of the four in the cabildo followed the succession pattern, with the first to take office sitting nearest to the door.

The new alférez, with two of his four escorts on either side, sat on the visitor's bench along with the higher officials, themselves once alfereces. The first regidor, or persona, addressed the first judge with the pat'o'tian. The fourth regidor distributed a liter of trago to the assembled officials, first to the judges, then the president and sindico, the alfereces, the person-

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is served when the expectations are that the individual will feel embarrassment. These occasions formerly occurred when the company arrived at the house of the *alférez* before the dance and when the *alfereces* mounted their horses. Cigarettes signal relaxation, and when the first round of cigarettes is served in the house setting, the company abandons formal restraints and, led by the chief *nakawane*, indulges in joking.

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Carnival and Easter Week. Carnival has changed over time more than any other religious ceremonial in the town. Until five years ago, a group of masked jokers visited the houses of the captains of the fiestas. They wore Ladino clothing, including vest, pants, and shoes, and they hid their faces behind masks or painted them black. They danced a "Ladino dance" (paired couples), first in the church and then in the houses of the *alfereces*. While dancing, they made sexual allusions about unmarried women. Their joking emphasized their strangeness to the villagers; for example one of the jokers might say, "You do not know what type of person I am. An airplane made me." They carried small stuffed animals which they made "cry." Pretending they were the husband of a woman, they would go to her and tell her to take care of her "baby." The woman speaker would sometimes respond to their jokes, saying, "Who are you? You are not good looking, you little black boy. You must be from Germany or from the other side of the water. Maybe you are from Patwitz or Yetawitz, and your father is *kurik*." People say the custom was discontinued because it was too expensive to give liquor to the jokers.

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Another carnival custom which has been lost is the "common meal" of squash on the five Fridays of Lent. Formerly the wives of the four *kobaria* brought squash from hot country, cooked it, and brought two gourds each to the church. The assistant divided it, giving two pieces to each of the *mayordomos*. This custom was stopped during the typhoid epidemic of 1928 and has never been resumed because, it is said, the people did not want to lose work time. These changes may be a response to the priest's attempts to modify some of the excesses of carnival. Whether or not this is so, the people prefer to attribute change to their own decisions.

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The events of Easter Week as recounted by an informant are outlined below.

Appendix I

Settlement of Domestic Cases

A. HOUSE ARRANGEMENT OF SEPARATION

The following transcription of a tape recording concerns the house arrangement of a domestic dispute involving Alberta, the niece and adopted daughter of Mariano. She left her husband and returned to Mariano's home with her one-year-old child because of her husband's abusive treatment. Mariano invited all of the members of the betrothal party, as well as the maliwanchetik who had assisted in the marriage negotiations and Victorio, Alberta's husband. The leader of the betrothal negotiations was unable to attend because he had been drinking all day at another betrothal party. The arrangement proceeded with the padrino of the wedding, Pablo, and Alvino, Victorio's uncle and another elder in the betrothal negotiations, leading the discussion. I asked Mariano to tape the session so that my presence would not be an interference. In the joking session, the tape recorder became a target for the men's humor when, trying to replay it, they found that one section had not recorded clearly. 627
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Pablo opened the discussion by asking the errant husband's elder representative, Feliciano, if the family wanted to take the girl back. Feliciano agreed that that was their purpose in coming, and that they must hear what happened to cause the dispute between the couple. Maria, the foster mother of Alberta, summarized their complaints against Victorio and his family. [522] •

Maria: *It is almost as though the child [Alberta's year-old daughter] has no father. We have been feeding her because we have had to support both of them. When the child became sick with diarrhea the father did nothing to help.*

Pablo: *Yes, we have to think of that. The child was frightened by her father and became ill.*

Maria: *When he came to our house, he fought Alberta, and the child was ill. Alberta went to the courthouse to complain about his behavior.*

Pablo: *It couldn't be arranged in the courthouse. It is better to settle the dispute here in the house.*

Appendix

335

Mariano took out cigarettes, and the group relaxed as all lit up the cigarettes and smoked. They discussed my tape recorder as they listened to the tape replayed. When they came to the section that did not record well, they decided that they should take it out and urinate on it. One man suggested that they should put it in prison, and another said that they should shoot it. This provoked general laughter. They went on to discuss the smoking habits of Ladinos. Pablo remarked that Ladino lawyers do nothing but sit in their offices and talk and smoke. Mariano and Victorio's father joked a great deal, the latter maintaining that Pablo had threatened to castrate him. This was picked up by Pablo who said that then Mariano would be a madrina to his godmother, Martina (the woman speaker in the betrothal negotiations). This provoked a great deal of laughter among the women. They then joked with Mariano about Pablo's other madrina, a Ladina from the neighboring town who sells the blood of slaughtered bulls. They refer to her as *me? Skisoo*, the fat one. Mariano remarked to the women that Victorio's father must be a witch, and someone would try to kill him on the road. The conversation turned from the danger of going alone in the woods to a discussion of hunting. Feliciano bragged that he had an excellent hunting dog which he bought from a Ladino and which he referred to as "the Ladino dog." Mariano asked what Ladino they bought it from, but Feliciano denied knowledge of who the man was. They suggested it was nothing but a Huastecan Indian who changed his clothing. The joking and drinking continued until midnight, when the assembled company finally broke up. The next day Alberta went to live with her husband in the new house he had built.

B. COURT ARRANGEMENT OF SEPARATION

Persons present:

Judge
 Father of Plaintiff
 Mother of Plaintiff
 Plaintiff
 Husband of Plaintiff
 Regidor
 President

This case concerns a husband who had been separated from his wife and wished a settlement so that she would return to him. The man had been married before, and he occasionally returned to his first wife. When he got drunk,

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